
NEWSLETTER

January 2007



**Celebrate! Holidays In The
U.S.A.**

The beginning of the new year has been welcomed on different dates throughout history. Great Britain and its colonies in America adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1752, in which January 1st was restored as New Year's Day. Ways of celebrating differ as well, according to customs and religions of the world. People in Moslem societies, for example, celebrate the new year by wearing new clothes. Southeast Asians release birds and turtles to assure themselves good luck in the twelve months ahead. Jewish people consider the day holy, and hold a religious ceremony at a meal with special foods. Hindus of India leave shrines next to their beds, so they can see beautiful objects at the start of the new year. Japanese prepare rice cakes at a social event the week before the new year.

Whatever the custom, most of people feel the same sentiment. With a new year, we can expect a new life. We wish each other good luck and promise ourselves to do better in the following year.

New Year's Eve (December 31)

In the United States, the federal holiday is January first, but Americans begin celebrating on December 31. Sometimes people have masquerade balls, where guests dress up in costumes and cover their faces with masks. According to an old tradition, guests unmask at midnight.

At New Year's Eve parties across the United States on December 31, many guests watch television as part of the festivities. Most of the television channels show Times Square in the heart of New York City. At one minute before midnight, a lighted ball drops slowly from the top to the bottom of a pole on one of the buildings. People count down at the same time as the ball drops. When it reaches the bottom, the new year sign is lighted. People hug and kiss, and wish each other "Happy New Year!"

New Year's Day

On January first, Americans visit friends, relatives and neighbors. There is plenty to eat and drink when you just drop in to wish your loved ones and friends the best for the year ahead. Many families and friends watch television together enjoying the Tournament of Roses parade preceding the Rose Bowl football game in Pasadena California. The parade was started in 1887, when a zoologist who had seen one in France suggested to the Valley Hunt Club in Pasadena, California that they sponsor "an artistic celebration of the ripening of the oranges" at the beginning of the year. At first the parade was a line of decorated horse-drawn private carriages. Athletic events were held in the afternoon, and in the evening, a ball where winners of the events of the day and the most beautiful float were announced. In later years colleges began to compete in football games on New Year's Day, and these gradually replaced other athletic competitions. The parade of floats grew longer from year to year, and flower decorations grew more elaborate.

The theme of the Tournament of Roses varies from year to year. Today the parade is usually more than five miles long with thousands of participants in the marching bands and on the floats. City officials ride in the cars pulling the floats. A celebrity is chosen to be the grand marshal, or official master of ceremonies. The queen of the tournament rides on a special float which is always the most elaborate one of the parade, being made from more than 250,000 flowers. Spectators and participants alike enjoy the pageantry associated with the occasion. Preparation for next year's Tournament of Roses begins on January 2.

In the warmer regions all around the country there are other games whose names are characteristic of the state. People watch the Orange Bowl game in Florida, the Cotton Bowl in Texas, and the Sugar Bowl in Louisiana. In most cultures, people promise to better themselves in the following year. Americans have inherited the tradition and even write down their New Year's resolutions. Whatever the resolution, most of them are broken or forgotten by February!

January 1st is not only New Year's Day but also:

❖ **Betsy Ross's Birthday** - born 1752

Betsy Ross sewed the first American flag. When we view the flag, we think of liberty, freedom, pride, and Betsy Ross. The American flag flies on the moon, sits atop Mount Everest, is hurtling out in space. The flag is how America signs her name. It is no surprise that Betsy Ross has become one of the most cherished figures of American History.

❖ **Paul Revere's Birthday** - born 1735

American silversmith, engraver, and patriot, whose famous midnight ride to warn colonists about the approaching British army made him a folk hero.

❖ **Ellis Island's Anniversary** - opened 1892

Ellis Island at the mouth of the Hudson River in New York Harbor, was at one time the main immigration port for immigrants entering the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

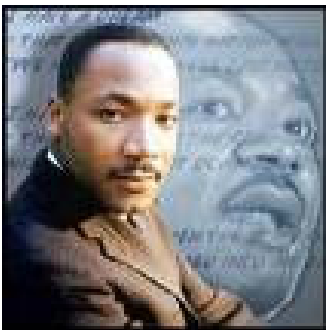
January 15, 2007



Each year on the third Monday of January schools, federal offices, post office and banks across America close as we celebrate *the birth, the life and the dream* of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

It is a time for the nation to remember the injustices that Dr. King fought. A time to remember his fight for the freedom, equality, and dignity of all races and peoples. A time to remember the message of change through nonviolence

WHO WAS THE REVEREND MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.?



King Jr. was the most eloquent voice in the U.S. civil rights movement during the 1950s and '60s. The keynote speaker at the famous March on Washington in 1963, he was also the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate. In 1955, King organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama. When the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that the bus segregation laws of Alabama were unconstitutional, the boycott that had lasted for more than a year ended in triumph for black dignity. Overnight, King had become a national hero and an acknowledged leader in the civil rights struggle. He was only 39 years old when he was felled by an assassin's bullet. Martin Luther King Jr. never wavered in his insistence that nonviolence must remain the central tactic of the civil rights movement, nor in his faith that everyone in America would some day attain equal justice.

*** MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE AMERICAN CORNER FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ***

HIGHLIGHTS FROM DECEMBER 2006 PROGRAMS



The presentation “**Export Process**” with guest speaker Mr. David M. Niepert, MBA, JD and Fulbright Senior Specialist in Macedonia was held on December 7th. Mr. Niepert provided a general overview of the export/import process, INCOTERMS which is the terminology to be used in international contracts to avoid misunderstandings, and several examples of how damage can occur in the transport of goods. With having a background not only in law but as a pilot, Mr. Niepert was able to present many examples of how export transactions can go wrong if the correct procedure is not followed. This instructive presentation provided a better understanding of the export process for those who are planning to export in the future and the importance of following procedure.



holiday season. The students were thrilled with the event and had prepared a Christmas Carol that they sang for us.

The evening event was aimed for the general member audience. This event included Christmas carols, Holiday Charades game and refreshments. Traditions and symbols linked with the holiday season in the United States were once again highlighted through this entertaining game.

The spirit of the holiday season was celebrated at the American Corner Bitola on December 21st with two programs. A day event was organized where 10 English students from the private language school MEGASOFT together with their professor came to the AC to learn more about how the holidays are celebrated in the US through interactive games. The games played highlighted important holidays symbols and their meanings while providing the opportunity for the students to use their English skills and learn more expressions associated with the



AMERICAN CORNER BITOLA MONTHLY PROGRAM –JANUARY 2007

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| Friday January 12th
14:00 o'clock | Video Showing “The Complete Battle of Gettysburg”
Battle of Gettysburg – Day 1 |
| Tuesday January 16 th
18:00 o'clock | English Conversation Hour
Please sign in to attend |
| Wednesday January 17 th
14:00 o'clock | Video Showing “The Complete Battle of Gettysburg”
Battle of Gettysburg – Day 2 |
| Friday January 19 th
14:00 o'clock | Video Showing “The Complete Battle of Gettysburg”
Battle of Gettysburg – Day 3 |
| Tuesday January 23 rd
18:00 o'clock | English Conversation Hour
Please sign in to attend |
| Wednesday January 24 th
14:00 o'clock | Video Showing “The Complete Battle of Gettysburg”
135 th Anniversary – Historians Roundtable
<i>Critical insight into the leadership and events for our nation's bloodiest conflict. The experts tell why it happened</i> |
| Thursday January 25 th
18:00 o'clock | “Human Rights Based Approach in Poverty Reduction
vis-a-vis the UN Millennium Development Goals:
National and International Legal Framework in Macedonia”
By Ninoslav Mladenovic,
Fulbright/Ron Brown Fellowship Recipient |
| Tuesday January 30 th
18:00 o'clock | English Conversation Hour
Please sign in to attend |
| Wednesday January 31 st
14:00 o'clock | Children Story Telling Hour |



New Books at the Corner

1. *Drink With The Devil* by Jack Higgins
2. *Last Message to Berlin* by Philippe van Rjndt
3. *Robert B. Parker* by Double Deuce
4. *Time of the Assassins* by Alastair MacNeill
5. *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma* by Naguib Mahfouz
6. *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy
7. *The Daughter of Time* by Josephine Tey
8. *An Argument with My Mexican Father* by Richard Rodriguez
9. *Deep Black* by Stephen Coonts
10. *Oscar and Lucinda* by Peter Carey
11. *The Summer of Katya* by Trevanian
12. *The British Cross* by Bill Granger
13. *Stones from the River* by Ursula Hegi
14. *Walking Towards Walden* by John Hanson Mitchell
15. *The Collector of Treasures: Short Stories* by Bessie Head
16. *Get a Good Nights' Sleep; How to Conquer your Insomnia without Drugs or Medications* by Katherine A. Albert, M.D., Ph.D.
17. *Traveler's World Atlas & Guide* by Rand McNally
18. *Lives on the Boundary; The Struggle and Achievements of America's Under Prepared* by Mike Rose
19. *The Internet Book: Everything you Need to Know About Computer Networking and How the Internet Works* by Douglas E. Comer
20. *Rush Limbaugh is a Big Fat Idiot and other Observations* by Al Franken
21. *Nothin' but Good Times Ahead* by Molly Ivins
22. *A Walk Across America* by Peter Jenkins
23. *Rise to Rebellion* by Jeff Shaara
24. *Our Inviting Eastern Parklands; From Acadia to the Everglades* by National Geographic Society
25. *Will my name be shouted out?* By Stephen O'Conner
26. *Take Me Out To The Ball Park* by Lowell Reidenbaugh
27. *Kinder, Gentler Cartoons* by Jeff Danziger

